UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social Council

Distr.
LIMITED

E/C.7/1994/L.4/Add.5
2 March 1994

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES
Second session
22 February-4 March 1994
Agenda item 9

# ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON ITS SECOND SESSION

Draft report

Addendum

Rapporteur: Mr. Patrick M. Chipungu

Chapter ___

## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS IN THE MINERAL SECTOR: (b) REGIONAL MINERAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT PROGRAMMES

1. The Committee considered item 7 (b) of its agenda at the 1st meeting of its Working Group on Mineral Resources, on 28 February 1994. It had before it the report of the Secretary-General containing a review of regional mineral resource assessment programmes and resource needs (E/C.7/1994/8).

2. The representative of the Department for Development Support and Management Services introduced the report. He emphasized that resource assessment information, gathered without consideration for the specific policy decisions that might be influenced by the data, might not be used, regardless of the quality of the assessment. That may partially explain why so much of the mineral resource information gathered in developing countries was never used to make any substantive policy decisions. Despite the inherent errors in resource assessment methodologies, planners and policy makers could more effectively establish long-term development strategies for a country by considering estimates of the economic potential of discovered and undiscovered mineral resources.

3. Several members expressed their appreciation for the quality of the report and stressed that minerals were a part of the crust of the Earth, which figured prominently in Agenda 21 in terms of integrated approaches to the planning and

management of land resources. Therefore, lack of significant mention of the mineral sector should not restrain the Committee from making substantial recommendations to the Commission on Sustainable Development.

4. The members noted that the resource assessment information developed and made available on a global basis could provide guidance to States Members of the United Nations and United Nations bodies, as well as to investors, in reorienting policies for improvement of the infrastructure in mining areas, and for improving information for development of that potential. They stressed that this information was an essential part of broader information in support of integrated natural resource management, as recommended in chapter 10 of Agenda 21.

5. In that context, one member expressed the need for characterization of the regions of the Earth's crust so that they could be linked to the potential for discovery of mineral deposit types. The value of identifying promising tracts in various parts of the world for developing a scientific understanding of the global resource potential and for long-term sustainable development was also cited.

6. Another member stated that the Committee should recommend action on the question of substitution/replacement of mineral resources with plastics and other industrial products because the volume of minerals consumed by mankind was rising, and it would be useful for the Committee to monitor that tendency.

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